

## **Literacy Policy 2017**

### St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

#### **Introduction**

Literacy skills are the key to learning in that they enable children to access other areas of the curriculum. It is our responsibility at St Elizabeth's to enable every child to develop his/her skills in the three key areas of Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing (in the Foundation Stage this is known as Communication, Language and Literacy Development). We put a large emphasis on children being able to read and have developed the big writing scheme.

#### **The Foundation Stage**

The Foundation Curriculum provides guidance for the education of 3 to 5 year olds. The curriculum is divided into six interlinked areas, one of which is Communication Language & Literature (Speaking + Listening, Reading, Writing, Spelling + Handwriting).

For each of these areas there are identified Early Learning Goals which lead into the National Curriculum Key Stage 1 PoS objectives.

#### **Speaking & Listening**

##### **Our Philosophy**

Speaking and Listening is one of the most fundamental means of communication and learning. It is the development of pupils' understanding of the spoken word and the ability to express themselves effectively in a variety of activities and situations.

##### **Aims**

As children pass through the school they should become increasingly competent in the following:-

- Listening, understanding and responding appropriately to others
- Formulating, clarifying and expressing ideas
- Using the vocabulary and grammar of spoken English
- Adapting their speech to a widening range of circumstances and demands.

##### **Implementation**

In order to enrich the children's understanding, interest and use of language, and encourage clear confident speech, classroom activities should be wide and varied and will include opportunities to engage in the following:-

- To listen, enjoy and respond to stories, poems and songs
- To re-tell stories and learn some poems/rhymes from memory
- To listen to and convey messages/instructions of increasing complexity
- To re-count experiences, both real and imagined in a logical manner to a widening audience.
- To formulate and answer questions.
- To contribute as speakers and listeners when engaged in imaginative play and drama

- To engage in collaborative talk when taking part in group tasks i.e. science/maths investigations.
- To express clearly own ideas, opinions on a specific topic
- To argue a point of view with confidence
- To be receptive to other peoples opinions and views
- To talk to different audiences and use appropriate language and expression
- To prepare talks using I.C.T. if required on a chosen or given topic
- To use speaking and listening appropriately as a social skill e.g. thanking someone, apologies, enquiries, complaints, telephone calls etc.

Children should be actively encouraged to talk in school but also to listen when appropriate.

Throughout the Key Stages and across all curricular areas, children are given the opportunity to speak individually; in groups; as a class and to speak to other adults/audiences. Increasing use is being made of 'circle time' especially in time-tabled PSHE lessons to promote speaking and listening skills. We celebrate speaking and listening with performance and presentation.

### **Assessment**

Assessment of speaking and listening is ongoing. Attainment is tracked against the Derbyshire Speaking and Listening grids. However if a teacher is concerned about a child's speaking and listening skills then this will be noted and may be discussed with parents.

## **READING**

### **Our Philosophy**

Reading is a search for meaning; it is also a source for discussion, reflection, writing and enjoyment. This means that reading, writing, listening and speaking are interdependent. To read is to open the door to future opportunities, experiences and knowledge.

We at St Elizabeth's believe that reading skills and the love and enjoyment of books should be treated as a priority. We seek to inspire, motivate and develop enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable readers.

The school environment promotes a positive attitude to text in all its forms e.g. displays, book areas, labels and notices. Children are encouraged to explore and enjoy books at every opportunity.

Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their child's reading in a variety of ways both at home and in school.

### **Aims and Objectives**

- To develop an understanding of print
- To make sense of messages and instructions in the environment.
- To understand and appreciate the value of books as a source of information and enjoyment.
- To read accurately and fluently.
- To give opportunity to explore a wide range of texts.

- To give knowledge and understanding of how a book works.
- To develop enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable readers.

**To this end children need to :-**

- Know that print carries meaning
- Develop an awareness of the patterns of sounds and their associated symbols.
- Develop a knowledge and understanding of the alphabet system.
- Develop visual and memory skills.
- Be able to build up words for themselves drawing on phonic and graphic knowledge.
- Use a variety of cues and clues to check and confirm meaning.
- To understand the basic conventions of choosing, using and caring for books
- To reflect on, respond to and evaluate texts.

**Implementation**

We follow the New National Literacy Framework for teaching that gives clear guidelines on a range of text, word and sentence level work to be covered. The teaching of Reading across both Key Stages will consist of a balance of shared reading with whole class, guided reading with groups at appropriate reading abilities, individual reading and focused word/sentence work.

In order to develop children's reading skills classroom activities should be wide and varied and will include opportunities to engage in the following:-

- Shared reading with teachers, parents, other adults and peers. Parents and children are encouraged to share books from the very earliest days.
- Reading non-fiction, fictional stories and poems aloud to the class or groups of children. Younger children are given the opportunity to join in and share big books. Older children may have stories serialised in order to foster suspense, excitement and anticipation.
- Children are encouraged to make their own books, either individually, in a group or as a class. These may be for a range of audiences.
- When reading books together with an adult, time is given to discussion, prediction, sound symbol correspondence, visual discrimination skills and key word recognition. At Foundation and Key Stage 1 children will be heard to read individually as often as possible. At Key Stage 2 children may be heard to read individually less often.
- On entry to school children are introduced to colour-banded books appropriate to their age and ability. They are moved to other colour bands according to their progress, interest and teacher assessment. As the children develop they are encouraged to read more widely from other sources in the library, classroom and home environment.
- Children throughout the Key Stages are taught to read sight words from the appropriate NLS High/Medium Frequency Word Lists.

- Silent reading is important particularly in the Key Stage 2 classes where our aim is not only to demonstrate that we value reading as an activity but also to encourage the habit of quiet sustained reading. Quiet reading times are organised daily.

As independence in reading progresses children are encouraged to read more widely and from increasingly difficult text e.g. factual, story, poetry, reference material, newspapers, periodicals, reports, brochures. timetables, advertising literature, reading from computer screen in ICT.

To do this effectively involves the ability to read efficiently and critically.

Children will be given opportunities to acquire Higher Order reading skills i.e.

- scan for information (Trackread)
- read with a purpose e.g. in order to ask or answer a question
- skim a passage to get the gist.
- library skills learn how to find information and evaluate that information e.g. using index to find shelf and relevant book using the Dewey Classification System.
- read and differentiate fact from fiction
- predict - using evidence from the text
- sequence - a chosen text is cut into sections and the child or group are invited to correctly sequence the text. Conclusions must be supported by evidence from the text.
- model - diagrammatic representation of information e.g. graphs, charts etc. Children are encouraged to ask a specific question and set down their answer in a form that makes it easy to check that the required information is recorded.

### **Assessment of Reading and Record Keeping**

In Reception children are formally assessed on an ongoing basis according to the Foundation Stage Profile. A phonic screening test in Y2 enables children to be further identified and supported with their phonic skills. At the end of KS1 and KS2 they are again formally assessed when completing SATs . Optional SATs are used in Yrs 3, 4, and 5. Assessment of a child's reading is levelled 3 times a year and their progress is plotted on a school tracking system. Including RA v CA scores completed at the start of the year. We talk to the children about their progress and to parents. We continually evaluate and develop teaching strategies based on our assessments and discussions with colleagues and primary support staff.

## **Writing, Spelling & Handwriting (AT3)**

### **Our Philosophy**

Writing is an important medium of communication. It provides creative pleasure and can be an aid to effective learning.

At St Elizabeth's we aim to encourage expression of thought, experience and imagination and to provide the skills and confidence required to record these feelings fluently, accurately and legibly on paper.

Writing, as reading, is cross-curricular.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

#### **At K.S.1**

- To differentiate print and pictures
- To learn to hold a pencil correctly in order to enable the development of comfortable, legible handwriting.
- To correctly form all letters of the alphabet including capitals and regulate the size and shape.
- To understand the conventions of writing from left to right and top to bottom of page.
- To understand that words have spaces between them
- To understand the value of writing and to foster an interest in words and their meanings
- To recognise spelling patterns and correctly spell NLS high frequency words and, where possible, medium frequency words
- To be introduced to dictionaries
- To develop an understanding of grammar and punctuation (capital letters, full stops, question marks, exclamation marks and speech marks)
- To show an awareness that writing has many purposes
- To use ICT for word processing

#### **AT K.S.2**

- To further develop, build on and strengthen the objectives at KS1
- To recognise the need to write for varied purposes and to write in response to this
- To use layout and presentation effectively
- To plan, draft, evaluate and re-draft work in order to improve clarity
- To use grammar and punctuation correctly.
- To use dictionaries and thesaurus effectively
- To memorise the visual patterns of words and spell correctly
- To use different forms of handwriting for different purposes and show neatness, clarity and fluency
- To develop confidence
- To use ICT for word processing/spelling

### **Implementation of Writing/Spelling and Handwriting**

We have decided to follow the NLS framework for teaching Literacy. This gives clear guidance and teaching objectives for each year group (Reception to Year 6) and ensures a balance of genre, text and purpose. Each class is time-tabled for Literacy every morning. The hour is divided into a balance of shared reading and writing, word and sentence work, independent writing and guided writing. Children who are highlighted as needing extra support are supported through different intervention strategies such as Better Words, ELS at KS1 and Better Reading Partnership at KS 2.

**Spelling** - spelling is a visual memory skill. Teaching should therefore emphasise looking at a word and recognising its pattern with a view towards reproducing it from memory rather than just copying from source.

From the Foundation Stage onwards spelling homework may be given as appropriate. At St Elizabeth's we use ICT spelling programs such as Word Shark to support the learning of spellings. Each morning KS 1 children have a twenty minute session on " Progression in Phonics" activities.

### **Handwriting**

Cursive writing follows a natural progression from infant scribble. The joins create flow and the flow aids progression in writing and spelling. Good habits need to be taught from the beginning to ensure that good habits are developed from an early age.

### **Implementation of Handwriting**

#### **K.S.1**

- Skills in acquiring fine co-ordination are encouraged i.e. scissors to cut out, modelling with dough, tracing, threading, lacing, sewing, construction toys.
- "Hands for Spelling Book 1" by C. Cripps is used to encourage fine motor skills in a more structured manner.
- Correct formation of each letter is demonstrated by the teacher. The children's progress is then monitored by the teacher i.e. each letter is started in the correct place, correct direction. Activities to reinforce this are chalk and boards, sandpaper letters, sand tray, dough and other tactile materials.
- Joined writing is introduced when the child's fine motor skills are sufficiently well developed and pencil control adequate. Correct letter formations are then taught in letter strings using "Hand for Spelling Book 2" by C. Cripps. Attention to regularity of size and uniformity of slope is given - at Year 1 handwriting is linked to the phonic teaching objectives of NLS.
- Children's progress is continually monitored. Guidance is given to individuals as necessary and extra practice given as homework.

#### **K.S.2**

- Formal class handwriting lessons may be given each week for lower KS2 when deemed necessary. At upper KS2 extra group or individual practise is given where necessary.
- Attention is always drawn to good legible handwriting and neat presentation of written work.
- Children are given opportunity to use different forms of handwriting for different purposes i.e. print for labels, maps

- From Year 5, children will be given opportunity to develop a handwriting style of their own but printing (when not labelling) will be discouraged.

### **Assessment**

- During the Foundation Stage children are assessed on language skills and fine motor control as part of the ELG's. Staff continually monitor children's progress. Evidence of each child's independent writing is assessed and recorded three times per year levelling is against the Derbyshire grid for writing and QCA test results.
- Assessment of children's writing is ongoing. We talk to the children about their progress, and to parents. We continually evaluate and develop teaching strategies based on our assessments and discussions with colleagues and primary support staff.
- The school holds evidence of our assessment of the N.C. levels for writing in assessment folders. This will be reviewed as and when necessary
- At the end of KS1 and KS2 children are formally assessed when completing SATs.

### **Roles & Responsibilities within the school**

The Head teacher has responsibility to ensure that

- The policy is implemented effectively throughout the school and that finance is available for resources and staff development.

### **Literacy Co-Ordinator**

The Literacy Co-ordinator has the responsibility to take a leading role in Literacy, to keep up to date with new developments, to communicate information about N.C. English to the staff, Head and Governors and to advise on the resources required for the effective development of the school's Literacy Policy.

### **Governors**

Governors monitor the Literacy Curriculum, mainly through the Head's report to governors. They must ensure the budget is being well managed to allow for the purchase of adequate resources and for staff development. Meetings are held between the named Literacy governor and Literacy coordinator on a regular basis.

### **Equal Opportunities.**

All children will be provided with equal access to a full and balanced curriculum. Language activities will be relevant to all children. They will provide equal opportunities for both sexes and reflect the needs of the individual.

A wide range of books and resources are available in the library and classrooms.

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## AT1 Speaking and Listening

### Assessment/Record Sheet

#### Foundation – ELG

- I use talk in my play
- I experiment with sounds
- I listen to and enjoy stories/songs/poems
- I take turns to speak
- I can retell a simple story in sequence
- I say please and thank you

#### Level 1

- I can talk about my own experiences
- I can follow simple instructions
- I can carry a simple message
- I can listen and usually respond appropriately
- I can tell other people what has happened

#### Level 2

- I respond appropriately when I work in a group
- I can ask and answer simple questions
- I can speak clearly
- I am aware of others when I speak
- I use more vocabulary i.e. subject verb adjective etc. when I speak
- I listen and respond appropriately
- I am aware of formal and informal speaking situations

#### Level 3

- I can speak and listen confidently and with interest
- I can take part in discussions
- I can formulate questions
- I can give and follow instructions when working with others
- I can speak clearly
- I can adapt what I say to the needs of the listener
- I am beginning to be aware of standard English

#### Level 4

- I can report back to others and express my ideas and opinions with clarity and understanding
- I can formulate and answer questions in a variety of contexts and situations
- In discussions I can express an opinion and take into account what others say
- I am beginning to vary expressions when speaking
- I can take part in a presentation of my work
- I speak using some features of standard English vocabulary and grammar appropriately

**Level 5**

- I can give a well organised and extended account of an event, experience, activity to an audience.
- I can justify and argue my point of view
- I use language effectively
- I know about local vocabulary and dialect
- I know that people change the way they talk in different situations and can adapt my speech accordingly.

## Spelling Strategies

### At KS1

- spelling is approached through games. Looking and listening for words within words, repeated patterns, rhyming patterns.
  - Simple words with common patterns are spelt out with attention is given to onset/rime i.e. sad, bad, dad, had

They are encouraged to sort words + initiate and discuss their own ideas for spelling rules.

- Words with common letter strings in are written down
- Mnemonics may be used to aid memory e.g. big elephants can't always use small entrances
- Look, cover, write, check procedure is then introduced to help sharpen the children's visual and memory recall.
- When giving children words, use the look, cover, write, check method (i.e. on Whiteboard/folded paper) but do point out interesting features of the word.
- When children ask for words they should be given opportunity to 'have a go' themselves paying attention to the beginning and ending sounds. If the child has a dictionary they should be given time later to check their spelling.
- Good spelling errors should be praised i.e. phonetically correct words like 'showted', 'foned', but the opportunity to teach the correct spelling to the individual should be taken.
- Commonly used key words such as 'and' 'this' 'went' etc., (see NLS 100 word list) will be taught throughout the K.S. Spellings may be given for children to take home and learn.
- Children should not feel inhibited to write because of concern over spellings.
- Content is most important when creative writing therefore children should be encouraged to either 'have a go' or leave a gap if they are unsure of a word. At the end of the writing, the correct spelling can be looked for without interruption to the flow of thought.

### At K.S.2

- Children are given spellings to learn each week. As in K.S.1, the children are encouraged to look at pattern, the shape of words and to find words within words.
- It is expected that children will apply spelling rules:- consonant vowel consonant, magic 'e' ,i before e except after c etc.,
- The union between handwriting and spelling is acknowledged and writing practice concentrating on specific phonemes is taken
- When children ask for spellings different strategies may be used
  - a) dictionary
  - b) using known words and associated letter strings
  - c) look, cover, write, check
  - d) letter by letter

However as a rule options (a) and (b) will be used. Children will be encouraged to use their own knowledge and experience.

- Children should be encouraged to read through their work and look for any spelling mistakes (self-correction)
- Spelling work should be fun !!

- ICT programs such as "Word Shark" are used to support the teaching of spelling.

## Handwriting

### **Correct posture and position:-**

Before writing care should be taken to see that children are seated correctly. The writing paper should be turned at a slight angle to the edge of the table and slightly to the left. The writing arm should be supported between the wrist and elbow (resting on table) and the free hand resting on the paper.

Children should sit upright to the tables with both feet resting on the floor.

### **Pencil Grip:-**

Writing implements should be held without tension. The thumb to the side, the forefinger on the top approx. 1.5mm from the tip. The middle finger should support the pen from below.

### **Left Handed Children**

#### **Posture and Position:-**

Left handed writers should sit upright with the left elbow close to the body. Paper should be placed to the left of the body at a slight angle and tilted to the right. If possible, left-handed children should sit on a higher chair.

#### **Pencil Grip:-**

The pencil should be held between the thumb and second finger and should lie on the side of the index finger in line with the top knuckle. The pen should be held a short way from the tip - this encourages the writer to see what he/she is writing. The grip should not be too tight.